

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ABLD, PFOR, US, UR

SUBJECT: EMBASSY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

1. SUMMARY. SOV DIRECTOR GARRISON CALLED IN SOVIET DCM VORONTSOV JUNE 4 TO INFORM HIM THAT DEPT STILL STUDYING FINAL PLANS FOR SOVIET EMBASSY PROJECT AND WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SUBMIT THEM TO NCPC BY JUNE 4 DEADLINE FOR ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT JUNE MEETING OF COMMISSION. VORONTSOV COMPLAINED BITTERLY THAT DEPT USING UNFAIR TACTICS IN HOLDING SOVIET PROJECT HOSTAGE AND NOTED THAT HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT DOBRYNIN RAISE QUESTION WITH SECRETARY. END SUMMARY

2. GARRISON NOTED THAT EMBASSY MOSCOW HAD RECEIVED NOTE FROM UPDK ON MAY 27 TRANSMITTING SERIES OF COMMENTS ON PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR US COMPLEX IN MOSCOW. US ARCHITECTS NOW STUDYING THESE COMMENTS BUT IT APPEARS THAT SOME RATHER EXTENSIVE REDESIGN OF ASPECTS OF OUR PROJECT MAY BE NECESSARY. ADMIN COUNSELOR SOUGHT CLARIFICATION OF SOVIET LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMENTS FROM HEAD OF CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION DIVISION OF UPDK

BUT WAS TOLD THAT IF SPECIAL PROBLEMS POSED FOR US ARCHITECTS THIS WOULD BE MATTER FOR NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS. THUS SITUATION IS THAT SOVIETS HAVE APPROVAL OF THEIR PRELIMINARY PLANS BUT US DOES NOT. DEPT IS STILL

STUDYING SOVIET FINAL PLANS AND WILL NOT COMPLETE STUDY IN TIME TO SUBMIT THEM TO NCPC JUNE 4.

3. VORONTSOV COMPLAINED AT LENGTH THAT SOVIET SIDE FAR AHEAD OF US IN PLANNING PROCESS AND THAT TACTIC OF HOLDING THEM HOSTAGE WHILE WE CATCH UP IS UNFAIR, PETTY DIPLOMACY NOT IN KEEPING WITH SPIRIT OF TIMES. CENTRAL PROBLEM IS THAT US SIDE HAS NOT WORKED AS DILIGENTLY ON ITS PROJECT AS SOVIETS HAVE ON THEIRS. THEY TOO HAVE HAD MANY PROBLEMS, ESPECIALLY WITH CONTRACTORS WHO HAVE SUBMITTED UNREASONABLE BIDS -- \$100 MILLION FOR 25 MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT -- BUT THEY HAVE WORKED WITH ALL CONCERNED TO OVERCOME THESE PROBLEMS RATHER THAN THREATENING US ABOUT OUR PROJECT. SOVIET EMBASSY AND MFA HAVE BEEN ACTIVE BEHIND SCENES IN MOSCOW IN SUPPORT OF US PROJECT BUT IF WE STALL THEM HERE THEY WILL FIND MOST INFLEXIBLE PEOPLE IN MOSCOW FOR US TO DEAL WITH. VORONTSOV CHARACTERIZED US TACTICS AS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT DOBRYNIN RAISE MATTER WITH SECRETARY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. GARRISON NOTED THAT RECORD OF SOVIET COOPERATION ON OUR PROJECT TO DATE HAD BEEN ANYTHING BUT BRIGHT. FOR EXAMPLE, WE CLEARED SOVIET SITE IN 1969 AND PERMITTED THEM TO USE IT FOR RECREATION WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT MOSCOW AUTHORITIES WOULD RECIPROCATATE, BUT MOSCOW SITE IS STILL UNCLEARED AND OUR REPEATED REQUESTS TO USE LAND FOR BADLY NEEDED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FELL ON DEAF EARS. ANOTHER EXAMPLE IS OUR REQUEST FOR TEST BORINGS FOR MOSCOW SITE WHICH FELL INTO BUREAUCRATIC MORASS. WHILE WE HAVE AN INFORMAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE HERE WITH SOVIETS ON THEIR PROJECT AND MAKE A REAL EFFORT TO HELP THEM SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS THERE IS NO SUCH RELATIONSHIP IN MOSCOW. WE RECEIVE THEIR COMMENTS ON OUR PLANS IN THE MAIL AND WHEN WE SEEK CLARIFICATION WE ARE SIMPLY TOLD THAT IF PROBLEMS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSED FOR OUR ARCHITECTS THEY MUST BE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS. THE 1969 AND 1972 AGREEMENTS ON SITES AND EMBASSY CONSTRUCTION PROVIDE FOR SIMULTANEOUS TURNOVER OF SITES AND OCCUPATION OF CHANCERIES. WE MUST HAVE PROGRESS IN BOTH PROJECTS. THE CURRENT SITUATION IS THAT WE HAVE ACTED ON THEIR PRELIMINARY PLANS BUT THEY HAVE NEITHER APPROVED OURS NOR ENGAGED IN DISCUSSIONS OF THEM.

5. FYI SOVIETS HAVE TOLD US THEY HOPE TO START CONSTRUCTION IN JULY, AND THAT COST RISING BY 100,000 DOLLARS A MONTH DUE TO INFLATION WHICH PERHAPS EXPLAINS VORONTSOV'S HEATED REACTION TO NEWS THAT APPROVAL OF FINAL PLANS WOULD BE DELAYED. END FYI KISSINGER

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